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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CA-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00	FBIE-00
	UTED-00	VC-00	FSI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	NEA-00	DCP-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OIC-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PER-00	GIWI-00	PRS-00
	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00
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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1716
INFO AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
DARFUR COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USLO TRIPOLI
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 000884

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/C, AF/SPG, D, DRL, H, INR, INR/GGI,
PRM, USAID/OTI AND USAID/W FOR DAFURRMT; LONDON AND PARIS
FOR AFRICAWATCHERS; GENEVA FOR CAMPBELL,
ADDIS/NAIROBI/KAMPALA FOR REFCOORDS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [KAWC](#) [CD](#) [SU](#) [VIP](#)

SUBJECT: SENATOR BIDEN MEETS REFUGEES AND REBELS, URGES
REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

1. (SBU) Summary: Senator Joseph Biden delivered a strong message of U.S. support for the resolution of the crisis in Darfur, tempered by a frank discourse on the USG limitations, during his visit to Chad from May 31 to June 1. Biden traveled to Oure Cassoni Refugee Camp near Bahai, where he met with the refugee committees, visited camp schools, spoke with women refugees, and was treated to a demonstration in favor of the U.N. Security Council actions against Sudan and the importance of education for Sudan's "lost generation". The visit revealed a high-level of organization among the Sudanese refugees. The refugees initially focused primarily on the current camp needs, but also stressed their desire for U.S. intervention in Darfur. Biden also met with representatives of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) to urge them to define their political agenda clearly and negotiate seriously. He explained to the refugees and to the rebel movement members the importance of setting realistic goals and expectations of how to achieve them. End Summary.

2. (SBU) Senator Joseph Biden and his staff traveled to Chad to assess the current situation of the 200,000 Sudanese refugees, speak with the African Union's Cease-fire Commission's officers, and hear about the impact of the refugee crisis from local Chadian representatives. Ambassador Wall, P/E officer, and Defense Attache accompanied Senator Biden and staff members Antony Blinken, Heather Flynn, and Margaret Aiken to Oure Cassoni Refugee Camp outside Bahai, Chad on May 31. The Prefect and Sultan of Bahai welcomed Biden upon arrival and asked that the international community not forget the sacrifice of the local population. Biden promised to make every effort to ensure that local Chadians were not left worse off after the refugees depart. Oure Cassoni Refugee Camp host some 29,000 Sudanese refugees and is the northern-most camp in Chad. The camp is considered temporary because it is too close to the border with Sudan, but efforts to relocate it were hampered initially by problems finding another site with water and now political discussions within the government as to the new location.

AFRICAN UNION: DARFUR VIOLENCE ONGOING

3. (SBU) Ghanaian Col. Ansu, the deputy commander of the African Union Cease-fire Commission sector at Tine, Sudan briefed the delegation at the airstrip in Bahai. Col. Ansu said the despite all the AU's efforts to date, the situation in Darfur "has given way to chaos and danger". The AU monitors come across residents living under trees because they fear attack or had already been attacked. Ansu wondered where these people are going to sleep once the rains begin. He said in other peacekeeping operations, victimized civilians normally gravitate toward the peacekeepers, but in

Darfur, the AU forces do not have a protection mandate and lack credibility with the local population. For example, when the AU investigates a situation, villagers do not trust that the monitors can protect them from jandjaweed or Government of Sudan reprisals if they speak to the AU. Moreover, the GOS regularly prevents the AU from investigating complaints against it or the jandjaweed. As a result, by the time the AU can get to the location of an alleged GOS or jandjaweed violation, it is too late. On the contrary, violations by the rebel movements get immediate attention. Ansu showed the delegation graphic pictures of recent victims of GOS-jandjaweed attacks, including rape victims.

14. (SBU) Biden asked what the AU needs to boost its capabilities. Ansu told Biden that the AU's mobility needs to be improved so that violations can be immediately investigated. Ansu noted that the AU Peace and Security Council agreed to expand the AU CFC mandate to protect people from attack or who have been attacked. The AU force needs to be increased to at least 6,000, requires helicopters, including gunships, armored personnel carriers, communications equipment, and medical support. He noted that in his previous peacekeeping experiences, APC's were used to gather up victims and people seeking protection from attack.

Currently, the AU has no means to move victims and potential victims out of danger. Ansu also stated that accurate maps and a stronger intelligence network is needed to carry out operations in a desert environment.

REFUGEE COMMITTEE: ON MESSAGE

15. (SBU) Upon arrival to Oure Cassoni Refugee Camp, Senator Biden met with the refugee committees. The meeting was very organized by refugee leaders, who also put their demands in writing. Their demands included education for children of all ages, better pay for teachers, more supplies for the health center, a wider variety of foodstuffs, vocational training for women, and a resumption of an internal refugee policing program, which was discontinued last year.

16. (SBU) Senator Biden probed the refugees for their thoughts on what is required for them to return to Sudan. They told Biden that they are isolated and have lost all of their possessions. The refugees unanimously agreed that peace and security must be assured. In their view, the following steps are necessary to make it possible to return to Sudan. First, the jandjaweed and Sudanese soldiers must be "vacated" from the area. Their weapons must be taken away from them. Second, village infrastructures must be rebuilt. Third, the GOS must compensate the refugees for everything that they have lost. Finally, the refugees raised the issue of emissaries from the GOS trying to carry out "reconciliation". The refugees stated that "they do not know" these traditional leaders and want them to stop what they are doing. (Note: This is a reference to "reconciliation" committees established by the GOS and traditional authorities in late 2004 to settle conflicts over land, cattle and camel theft, and local disputes on the border between Chad and Sudan. However, the refugees view them as GOS-sanctioned provocateurs. End Note.) The leader of the women's refugee committee added that all war criminals should pay for what they did at the war crimes tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania.

17. (SBU) The refugees burst into applause several times in support of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1593 and U.S. efforts on behalf of Darfur. They stated that only U.S. and European troops can resolve the security situation in Darfur. Biden urged the refugees to be realistic in outlining their demands and describing what it is that they need after security is restored. He then outlined U.S. efforts to date, including \$500 billion in assistance on the Darfur issue, leading the diplomatic community in putting pressure on Khartoum, and logistical support for African Union forces. Biden continued to explain the political realities of committing U.S. troops to Darfur and what the refugees could realistically expect the U.S. to provide. He asked them to be clear on what they want and need from a political settlement because the leaders in the U.S. must justify their policies to the American taxpayer. It is important for legislators to be able to demonstrate that the situation can be resolved and explain the best options. Biden assured the refugees that he would continue to work for a resolution to the Darfur crisis, including his continued advocacy for a high-level special envoy to play the role that former Senator John Danforth played in brokering the North-South agreement.

SCHOOL VISIT

18. (SBU) Biden visited with children in one of the camp's school blocks. Over 7,500 children are attending classes in 101 tents. There are two shifts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon due to the limited classroom space. He urged them to take school seriously because it is the key to their future and the future of Sudan. The children in school zone A had organized a demonstration, complete with signs and chants in support of more education, the United Nations Security Council, and the United States.

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WOMEN'S VOICES
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19. (SBU) A group of women refugees were assembled to speak with Senator Biden on a range of issues. Biden told the refugees of his interest in issues that affect women, ranging from family issues to protection and gender-based violence. He told them about his effort to provide legislation that would enhance protection of women and children in refugee camps. The women repeated earlier messages from the refugee committee meeting and focused on their immediate needs, such as education, income-generating activities, a variety of food sources, and a resumption of the internal camp security provided by the refugees. Biden asked what types of security problems are present in the camp. The refugees said that the absence of this refugee security team meant that fights between women and others between children cannot be controlled. They did not raise issues of rape or sexual violence in the camp.

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REBEL AGENDA
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10. (SBU) In N'Djamena, Senator Biden met with representatives of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) led by Bahar Arabie. Biden asked Bahar to outline the situation in Darfur, SLM's objectives, and how the various tribes in Darfur identify themselves as Arab or African. Bahar thanked Biden for the support the U.S. is providing the people of Darfur, noting that Americans are responsible for 70 to 80 percent of the assistance. He said that the SLM's declaration of principles include an autonomous status for Darfur and a transitional period similar to that in the North-South agreement. According to Bahar, SLM has not discussed details such as the number of portfolios in the government because 28 percent of them have been given to the South. This means that the Darfur groups will need to discuss these issues with representatives from both the north and the south. The jandjaweed must be controlled and an alternative court must be established to try war criminals. Arabie stated that it would not be easy for SLM to get key members to Abuja for a June 10 resumption of the talks. However, SLM would try and also plans to keep the size of its delegations to about 20 or 30 representatives.

11. (SBU) Biden asked Arabie if the rebel movement is united. Bahar stated that SLM has its internal differences and must have a conference to select its representatives, chief negotiator, and a technical committee to implement decisions. However, Bahar assured Senator Biden that SLM will present a united front at the talks in Abuja. Bahar said the movement is concerned that the AU's mandate is too restrictive and there are not enough troops on the ground. He welcomed U.S. and NATO assistance to provide logistics and personnel to strengthen the AU. Bahar told Biden that 10,000 troops are needed due to Darfur's large size. Bahar also asked if SLM could visit the U.S. and make its case to the U.S. Congress.

12. (SBU) Senator Biden offered his assistance on this front, but urged the SLM to develop a clear message, select a few articulate individuals, and develop an organized presentation. He explained that many members of the U.S. Congress view Darfur as a humanitarian tragedy and are motivated to assist and seek a resolution. However, in order to get Congress and the American public to commit more resources to Darfur, including NATO support, it is critical that the movement is organized and clear about its objectives, including what a victory in Darfur looks like. Senator Biden told Bahar that SLM needs to define the next steps after the killing is stopped. Biden advised that SLM get together and work on these issues. He recommended that, when they are ready, they should work through the Embassy to contact his staff. He offered to send a staff member back to help SLM with its presentation for members of Congress. Biden described what the Congress realistically can do on Darfur and his own advocacy on the issue, particularly his support

for NATO logistics support for the AU and a high level U.S. envoy for Darfur.

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COMMENT

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¶13. (SBU) The assurances of continued U.S. interest and advocacy on Darfur, tempered by a realistic view of the limitations on U.S. support, were important messages to convey to the refugees and the rebel movement. UNHCR and its implementing partners are reporting a positive impression from the visit in the camp, especially as a result of Senator Biden's willingness to spend over three hours listening and talking to the refugees. Due to its proximity to the border, Oure Cassoni's refugee population is clearly more politicized than in the other camps. They demonstrated a high level of organization and political savvy, and most refugees we spoke with were definitely "on message". We note that the African Union helicopter was an essential part of the delegation's travel, since the road between Bahai and Oure Cassoni was covered by blowing sand. Post greatly appreciates the efforts of the African Union's Mission in Sudan and Cease-fire Commission authorities on behalf of the U.S. delegations.

¶14. (U) Senator Biden did not have a chance to clear this message prior to departure.

¶15. (U) Khartoum and Tripoli Minimize Considered.
WALL

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